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## Woman gets 30 years in slaying

**The Associated Press**  
PASCAGOULA — A 19-year-old Gulf Coast woman has been sentenced to 30 years in prison for her part in the March 2000 shooting death of Robert Bruce Martin of Vandevre.

Judge Dale Harker sentenced Crystal Broadus on Thursday after she pleaded guilty in Jackson County Circuit Court to reduced charges of manslaughter and robbery.

Harker sentenced her to 20 years for manslaughter and 10 years for robbery. Broadus will be eligible for parole after serving 24 years.

Martin was shot in the head at his home in Vandevre on March 22, 2000, with a 12-gauge shotgun held at close range.

The victim's son, Jeremy Martin, Broadus, Donnie Rysle

and Richard Jacobs were arrested several days later in Texas.

Two others, Christina Basteau and Joseph Bailey were arrested in the Ocean Springs area.

Jeremy Martin, 19, and Richard Jacobs, 19, who authorities said pulled the trigger, each were convicted of capital murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole.

## Ex-Bay St. Louis officer charged

**The Associated Press**  
BAY ST. LOUIS — A 35-year-old reserve officer with the Bay St. Louis Police Department was charged during an incident that led to a charge of sexual battery, Bay St. Louis Police Chief Frank McNeil said.

The officer, Herbert Roles, was arrested this week on a charge of sexual battery and two counts of statutory rape.

McNeil said he did not think Roles was on duty when the alleged

statutory rapes occurred.

The two statutory rape charges accuse Roles of fondling and having sexual intercourse with a 13-year-old girl between Feb. 16 and March 22, according to a complaint filed by the girl and her parent.

The statutory rape charges carry a minimum of 20 years in prison. Roles could get up to 30 years for the sexual battery charge.

Roles was a reserve officer for Bay St. Louis from 1991 until last

Wednesday, when he was relieved of his duties. He was being held Friday at the Hancock County jail on a \$125,000 bond. His hearing is scheduled for April 24.

"This is very distasteful," McNeil said. "It sheds a bad light on police officers, and I'm sorry it happened."

Roles' arrest is the result of an investigation by the Bay St. Louis internal affairs unit and its detective unit. The case was turned over to the Mississippi Highway Patrol.



B.W. Construction workers Benjamin White (left) and Charlie Brewer assemble a StormCloset tornado shelter for display at Pinthouse Gallery in Brandon on Friday.

StormCloset is an above-ground, indoors tornado shelter that also can be used as a vault for protecting valuables.

Vickie D. King/The Clarion-Ledger

## Woman fatally shot, son hurt in Canton; husband charged

**By Theresa Kieley**  
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

The husband of a woman shot at home Saturday morning has been charged in her death and in the wounding of a 17-year-old stepson, an official said.

Sherry Readus, 38, was pronounced dead at the Madison County Medical Center in Canton, said a spokesman for the Madison County Sheriff's Department.

Her son, not identified due to his age, is being treated at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, said the spokesman.

Kenneth LaWayne Readus, 33,

of 707 Mace Street, Canton, has been charged with aggravated assault and murder and is being held without bond in the Madison County jail, said the spokesman.

An unidentified party called 911 at 4 a.m. to report a shooting at the Madison Heights Apartments on 707 Mace Street in Canton, said the spokesman.

Shortly afterwards, Kenneth LaWayne Readus turned himself in at the Canton Police department, said the spokesman.

The Madison County Sheriff's Department is investigating the case.

## Fish: Signs posted; churches contacted to spread the word

**From 1B**  
Tensaphere have been banned since the early 1970s, but they still persist in streambeds and lake bottoms in the heavily agricultural Delta.

Bass said the levels of the pesticides in Delta waters are the lowest since the MDEQ has been testing fish. Testing will continue and the advisory will remain in effect until the levels lower.

"We see some very encouraging signs," Bass said.

"The sample that we did last year gave us some indications that there are some lakes and streams in the Delta where we could lift the advisory, and we will go back there this year to confirm that. If we do, we'll be lifting the advisory in several places in the Delta."

MDEQ contacted about 1,400

Delta churches by mail this week in an attempt to spread the word about the warning.

"We sent letters to every church, synagogue and mosque that we could identify in the Delta asking the church leaders to help us get the word out to their congregation and to their friends and neighbors," Bass said.

"We have put up signs throughout the Delta along the stream banks and at boat ramps," he said.

"We'll be sending information to health clinics and we have participated in a number of health fairs and expos."

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture has passed regulations that require fish markets to display the MDEQ fish advisory posters if they sell bottom-feeder fish from the Delta.

Volunteers are being trained on putting out car fires had to be canceled because too few people showed up.

There are no specific requirements to becoming a firefighter, Collier said. However, the state requires firefighters to have two hours of training a month. Firefighters can also become certified by the state and go through a 40-hour volunteer firefighter certification course. It includes classroom work and hands-on training.

During 2001, volunteers served 6,577 hours, excluding training. Some volunteers find it hard to spend that much time away from their families.

"I think a lot (of the shortage) has to do with family activities and time constraints," said Tommy MacDermott, chief of the North Forrest Volunteer Fire Department.

He said in the winter, when there are fewer outdoor and family activities, he gets a better response on calls for service.

Volunteer firefighters serve without pay, and it can be costly to volunteer if there's no money to buy the necessary equipment.

"I'm not saying pay (firefighters), but some sort of reimbursement," Cooper said. "Reimbursement for stuff like gas, ruined clothes, shoes."

## Safe: Use to store valuables, escape from intruders if needed

**From 1B**  
"It's saving peoples' lives."

Hughes said the safe room can double as a safe for valuables and an escape from intruders. "If you were at home and it sounded like someone was trying to get in the house, you can go in, shut that door, and they are not going to get in," Hughes said. "It's got three locks inside the door and you can't shoot through the door."

National Weather Service meteorologist Jim Stefkovich said Mississippi ranks near the top nationally in tornado deaths.

"We average about 27 tornadoes a year. You get in places like in Oklahoma or Texas they have well over 100," Stefkovich said. "One-third of all deaths from tornadoes occurred in Mississippi last year. That's way too many considering the number of tornadoes we have compared to other states."

Stefkovich said warnings come as much as 10 to 20 minutes before a tornado hits. "But those warnings are useless if people don't take action."

Victor Bennett, of Madison, headed the warnings he heard. His

home was heavily damaged in a tornado that hit Madison Nov. 24.

Bennett awoke to loud wind and smashing noises. A shelter inside or outside would have been welcome.

"When I turned on the radio and heard a tornado had crossed Cypress Lake, I got in my truck and outran it," he said. "I think (shelters) are worth having... If I could afford one, I'd have one—no doubt in my mind. I'm thinking about building one myself."

Stefkovich said buried shelters are probably best for people with manufactured homes because

there has to be a slab to build an interior safe room on.

Stefkovich is usually at work when severe weather hits. Two interior rooms at the National Weather Service are ready when needed to protect staffers.

At his home, Stefkovich tells his family to get under the stairway through a closet. For families with that option, he recommends going into an interior closet or bathroom in the center of the house and staying away from windows. He also recommends weather alert radios.

## Volunteers: Manpower problem statewide, nationwide; time away from family also issue

**From 1B**  
"It's saving peoples' lives."

Levellie is a drastic example. Some departments are in better shape.

The eight fire departments in the county have 156 firefighters. Collier said each department could use another 10 volunteers.

Officials would like to capitalize on the heroic image firefighters gained after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and President Bush's call for every American to give 4,000 volunteer hours over their lifetimes.

The manpower crisis is a nationwide and statewide problem as well, officials said. Nationally, the number of volunteer firefighters has declined about 10 percent since 1983, according to the National Volunteer Fire Council.

In McLaurin, Fire Chief Carl Deas said when too few of his volunteers show up at a fire, volunteers from the Dixie and Brooklyn departments back him up.

"Communities really just don't realize it takes people to protect them," Deas said. "The less people we have, the more people we have to call out from other departments."

Officials cite various problems with recruiting and keeping firefighters as well as getting them to

training and emergencies.

Volunteers often work miles away from their communities, making it harder for them to respond to daytime fires. And employers sometimes don't endorse volunteers leaving the job to fight a fire.

Mutual aid among fire departments is common, but the state requirements call for a minimum of 10 to 12 people from one department to respond to a fire, Collier said. If that can't be accomplished, the fire ratings go up and residents' insurance premiums go up.

Usually the problem is daytime response, said Larry Barr, state fire

coordinator. Staffing is fine after 6 p.m. at night.

Department records show that in Forrest County last year there were 691 calls for fires and medical backup. Of those, 64 were structure fires.

Structure fires are down, said Barr, explaining that things can get pretty slow around the fire station.

"If you can't squirt water—you look elsewhere (for excitement)."

He said structure fires account for 14 percent of the fire alarms statewide.

House fires get the most people out at the McLaurin Volunteer Fire Department, Deas said. But two

weeks ago a training session on putting out car fires had to be canceled because too few people showed up.

There are no specific requirements to becoming a firefighter, Collier said. However, the state requires firefighters to have two hours of training a month. Firefighters can also become certified by the state and go through a 40-hour volunteer firefighter certification course. It includes classroom work and hands-on training.

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